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ABSTRACT

A study was conducted at Mott Community College to assess the effectiveness of developmental courses in preparing students to meet prerequisite reading skill requirements. Files for all 362 students who took a reading course in fall 1988 provided the data for the study. Study findings included the following: (1) 85% of the students completed the reading course, and 79.53% of the course completers improved their reading achievement test scores by at least two grade levels; (2) the 62 students who tested below the 9th grade level in fall 1988 made an average of a half year's progress in vocabulary development and advanced two grade levels in comprehension, and were generally advised to take another reading course; (3) 51.7% had been influenced to enroll in the reading course by an advisor, and 33.8% took it upon themselves to enroll; (4) 50 of the students intended to enroll in the college's nursing program, 32 in a business program, and 15 in the dental hygiene program; and (5) 174 of the students indicated that their highest priority was to improve their reading comprehension skills. Based on study findings, it was concluded that whether students were prepared to meet the reading requirements of other college courses depended upon their skill levels at entry. (ALB)

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COMMUNITY COLLEGE READING STUDENTS: DATA AND DEMOGRAPHICS

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Mott Community College
Flint, Michigan

February 19, 1989

JC 890 246

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COMMUNITY COLLEGE READING STUDENTS: DATA AND DEMOGRAPHICS

OBJECTIVE 3.4: "Analyze student data to determine successfullness (sic) of developmental courses in preparing students to meet prerequisite skill requirements by third month of project year 1988-89."

DISCIPLINE: Reading

DATA SOURCE: Student files from the fall semester, 1989. They include all students who took a reading course that semester, except a very few files of students who have continued into another reading course in the winter of 1989. Those student-files were withdrawn in order that the student might continue his/her course of improvement.

Mott Community College offers a reading course for deaf students. Since those students generally enter the college with about a third grade reading level, their scores are handled separately in this report. That report was done by the teacher of the reading class for deaf students, Joyce Toet.

DEMOGRAPHICS: The total number of student-scores in this report is 362. There were 244 females, 107 males, and 11 students with names like Tracy, Kelly, Pat, etc. which made sex determination impossible.

Most of those students, 172 or 45.5%, came from Flint. Twenty nine, or 8%, were from Burton.

Other home towns were:

19 students from Mt. Morris
18 students from Davison
18 students from Flushing
16 students from Fenton
16 students from Grand Blanc

The rest of the students came by groups of six or less from other small towns encircling Flint. One student drove from Saginaw and another from Milford.

PLACEMENT: When students were asked what, or who influenced them to enroll in a reading course, answers were:

179: Advisor (51.7%)
117: Themselves (33.8%)
28: Don't know
8: Other students
7: Both self/advisor
5: Placement test scores
2: Other

PROGRAM: When asked about their vocational plans, students indicated that they intended to enter the following programs

50: Nursing
32: Business
15: Dental Hygiene
15: Criminal Justice
8: Computer Science
6: Child Care
6: Art

A wide variety of other vocations was mentioned five times or less. One Hundred-Seven (107) students left that item blank or said they were undecided.

PRIORITIES: When students were asked which aspect of the reading course was most important to them, they answered:

174: comprehension
40: concentration and motivation
34: retention
26: vocabulary
20: reading rate
16: study skills
13: listening and note taking
6: relaxation
5: spelling
4: test-taking

Other skills received three, or fewer, responses.

LEARNING MODES: When the students in those classes were asked about the method by which they learned most easily, they responded:

161: by listening (44.2%)
95: by reading (26%)
83: doesn't matter
25: no response

TEST SCORES: Mott Community College is an open-admissions institution. Our population generally reflects a normal general population and therefore we have students reading at all levels of the achievement spectrum. Since reading tests generally test only a segment of the entire reading range well, we use at least two tests and we use various forms and levels of those two tests. During the fall of 1988, we were using Cooperative English Tests: Reading comprehension, Forms 1A, 1B, and 1C. We also used Gates-MacGinitie Reading Tests, Levels D and E, and sometimes lower levels. The former test is designed for reading levels of ninth grade and above. The latter test is designed for reading levels below ninth grade, that is, junior high school and elementary school levels. Following are listed the pre- and post-test scores for vocabulary, comprehension, and speed of comprehension for students who took the Cooperative English Tests: Reading

Comprehension (published by Educational Testing Service, Princeton, N.J.).

Individual Test Scores:

Vocabulary		Comprehension		Speed of Comprehension	
Pre-test Scores	Post-test Scores	Pre-test Scores	Post-test Scores	Pre-test Scores	Post-test Scores
140	152	147	161	141	158
144	151	145	150	138	141
159	Withdrew	149		140	
146	147	147	154	154	158
149	159	145	154	143	157
143	157	149	155	140	143
149	155	153	157	149	160
144	155	154	152	146	155
173	171	153	157	145	156
139	156	154	154	146	148
150	152	145	148	143	148
170	167	153	164	142	154
147	138	147	155	139	145
150	155	149	150	140	153
144	161	149	152	140	152
140	141	149	145	141	143
147	Withdrew	142		156	
150	157	140	158	142	159
144	148	157	155	149	162
137	U-absences	153		142	
138	146	149	155	140	150
143	153	147	149	141	156
140	146	140	147	136	155
164	167	145	154	138	158
155	152	155	150	152	142
138	152	138	148	134	151
152	160	142	154	140	158
143	148	147	136	149	139
144	Withdrew	147		146	
137	150	134	161	132	156
151	156	145	147	151	141
150	161	154	172	143	159
144	151	151	155	141	145
134	159	140	140	135	136
137	156	142	145	138	148
143	147	129	140	133	145
156	165	149	168	141	165
161	170	154	160	143	149
143	151	136	154	136	142
143	130	140	124	135	128
152	157	147	155	143	158
148	155	140	139	135	157
150	151	145	150	138	146
139	150	142	158	136	147
149	151	145	150	140	156
150	153	134	145	132	137

Vocabulary		Comprehension		Speed of Comprehension	
Pre-test Scores	Post-test Scores	Pre-test Scores	Post-test Scores	Pre-test Scores	Post-test Scores
141	155	145	155	146	152
153	159	145	155	139	163
154	156	159	157	152	158
147	144	151	153	148	151
148	155	147	147	146	142
149	157	153	150	146	154
156	159	147	154	142	162
147	147	140	142	140	137
159	164	138	158	140	157
155	160	145	147	138	155
140	138	148	154	154	156
143	155	142	145	136	149
147	161	142	154	136	156
153	160	147	158	148	157
138	148	136	139	133	140
146	150	140	151	145	158
149	148	151	147	143	152
151	159	151	162	145	162
152	157	140	154	157	154
152	163	149	158	140	156
143	147	145	147	138	139
150	158	142	159	136	164
146	159	153	154	154	159
157	158	142	163	136	151
141	151	145	150	138	146
149	152	140	142	135	136
140	147	151	143	145	155
146	152	145	148	143	157
139	155	145	150	138	149
146	153	140	148	140	141
146	148	151	150	141	148
143	152	142	155	138	152
144	155	151	158	141	147
136	Dropped	145		138	
141	152	145	148	151	155
141	152	145	145	138	137
148	158	142	148	141	156
146	153	145	154	148	149
147	148	138	150	142	140
149	Withdrew	154		154	
136	152	145	150	145	149
144	153	136	142	138	145
149	144	153	152	145	145
137	141	145	150	138	145
139	157	142	152	136	141
158	162	151	158	143	157
135	151	138	154	134	UT
159	Withdrew	155		157	
147	Withdrew	156		155	

Vocabulary		Comprehension		Speed of Comprehension	
Pre-test Scores	Post-test Scores	Pre-test Scores	Post-test Scores	Pre-test Scores	Post-test Scores
149	148	140	152	138	143
148	151	140	152	138	158
146	147	140	145	135	145
143	152	142	155	136	158
143	158	147	155	139	154
147	U-absences	138		134	
152	157	154	157	187	154
139	155	147	151	139	145
152	147	134	150	148	148
139	143	142	147	139	145
149	158	151	160	141	158
143	152	142	150	136	146
139	146	138	157	141	155
143	148	142	148	UT	
139	U-absences	142		136	
147	155	138	155	134	158
147	146	136	142	133	139
147	146	145	150	145	148
151	150	138	145	134	149
161	Dropped	159		151	
143	157	136	145	133	143
149	155	140	152	135	156
150	162	147	151	141	152
144	Withdrew	149		146	
144	151	140	145	139	149
149	159	151	157	146	159
148	147	140	153	135	149
151	Dropped	147		141	
147	155	142	155	136	157
136	147	136	147	133	139
153	165	165	158	163	162
159	162	149	148	140	146
149	153	145	155	143	154
146	146	138	154	134	151
146	U-absences	147		140	
143	143	142	145	136	148
144	152	138	154	146	142
149	162	147	163	139	157
144	153	147	145	145	151
150	157	151	147	145	141
143	148	149	155	140	143
150	147	151	154	141	149
153	163	149	159	140	159
141	Dropped	140		135	
157	167	160	158	154	167
143	146	145	154	141	162
144	143	142	126	136	129
153	159	149	164	140	162
152	151	147	154	140	160

Vocabulary		Comprehension		Speed of Comprehension	
Pre-test Scores	Post-test Scores	Pre-test Scores	Post-test Scores	Pre-test Scores	Post-test Scores
143	152	147	145	145	146
139	147	140	149	135	153
157	163	149	154	143	158
155	159	136	152	133	142
135	158	138	154	134	152
152	153	142	158	139	148
139	148	138	143	138	145
137	148	145	149	142	152
146	157	147	157	143	154
146	151	155	154	149	159
148	136	142	134	136	133
150	157	140	152	141	150
160	169	136	158	133	163
129	143	140	149	135	152
149	160	145	147	149	155
153	160	156	164	151	167
141	157	134	140	132	136
146	Dropped	140		135	
149	Dropped	138		141	
144	153	142	154	136	154
144	U-absences	154		143	
150	146	138	149	134	140
140	155	142	159	136	139
139	153	142	150	136	146
143	157	136	152	134	151
151	153	147	154	141	160
143	156	142	134	136	133
146	146	140	157	136	145
143	147	149	149	145	152
135	146	140	145	135	142
147	159	142	158	148	154
157	163	145	162	139	162
143	143	140	155	135	148
138	148	140	152	135	133
140	150	134	145	132	139
139	144	134	136	132	136
141	155	145	152	139	142
137	150	153	142	142	151
149	155	149	154	151	159
150	156	145	138	138	135
144	147	140	154	139	143
155	157	147	139	139	140
151	156	145	157	139	145
151	153	136	152	145	155
144	148	151	158	UT	
146	161	138	156	134	163
150	160	145	161	145	163
146	152	140	150	138	143
138	152	147	157	139	155

Vocabulary		Comprehension		Speed of Comprehension	
Pre-test Scores	Post-test Scores	Pre-test Scores	Post-test Scores	Pre-test Scores	Post-test Scores
138	151	151	155	149	157
143	146	140	142	138	136
147	U-absences	153		148	
154	159	147	152	143	154
139	153	140	156	135	148
147	155	151	154	148	150
141	143	140	150	142	161
160	167	154	161	148	159
144	146	142	150	154	154
148	Withdrew	151		145	
149	160	157	167	148	164
152	159	147	164	143	161
144	157	145	155	140	159
139	157	132	150	131	155
139	157	138	155	134	157
146	U-absences	145		148	
141	151	154	145	154	156
155	157	145	155	138	146
151	152	142	152	149	164
150	153	138	150	138	153
150	157	154	172	143	160
139	148	142	145	141	142
154	151	140	152	138	143
153	157	147	155	146	149
151	151	142	147	136	141
134	147	147	148	140	142
162	162	155	157	152	162
146	Withdrew	142		143	
150	156	149	147	141	145
147	150	142	150	136	145
138	153	142	151	141	149
147	148	142	147	136	139
140	U-absences	142		145	
149	148	138	128	148	142
153	150	142	157	139	156
139	148	149	150	141	142
178	174	145	147	138	139
139	137	147	128	141	143
151	156	142	158	139	158
148	158	145	152	152	151
146	156	145	155	155	158
155	162	153	150	142	146
162	162	142	154	136	156
137	157	138	142	134	143
146	156	149	150	148	159
135	148	142	152	141	150
150	156	149	155	142	158
135	155	142	139	136	141
149	155	138	155	145	162

Vocabulary		Comprehension		Speed of Comprehension	
Pre-test Scores	Post-test Scores	Pre-test Scores	Post-test Scores	Pre-test Scores	Post-test Scores
144	U-absences	138		135	
139	148	140	151	135	134
144	150	138	152	134	151
141	151	139	157	136	159
143	147	142	145	148	148
143	150	147	149	149	145
147	144	136	154	140	153
141	Withdrew	142		136	
149	Dropped	147		146	
144	147	145	150	138	140
156	163	156	161	154	167
141	151	136	152	133	155
154	140	145	136	139	134
148	150	134	150	132	148
147	167	147	154	139	146
153	156	142	151	136	156
140	155	142	145	136	151
148	155	147	150	152	151
146	141	140	136	135	140
146	150	151	139	142	139
133	144	140	153	135	149
149	159	140	145	138	147
149	156	159	154	149	145
159	165	149	148	155	159
146	153	145	154	142	143
141	157	156	162	146	158
149	174	142	148	149	150
157	157	147	154	139	152
153	NFC	149		142	
136	NFC	142		136	
150	NFC	142		138	
149	NFC	140		139	
144	NFC	147		139	
147	NFC	142		139	
146	NFC	145		138	
141	NFC	145		138	
149	NFC	140		139	
150	NFC	153		142	
140	NFC	129		130	
144	NFC	157		148	
140	NFC	138		138	
136	NFC	138		134	
141	NFC	147		142	
157	NFC	147		140	
152	NFC	136		133	
148	NFC	145		138	

Key
NFC = Never finished classes
MPB = Mean percentile band
AGL = Approximate grade level
AGLB = Approximate grade level below

N:290	N:246	N:290	N:246	N290	N:246
Total 42,493	Total 37,730	Total 41,927	Total 37,205	Total 37,205	Total 36,495
Mean 146.53	Mean 153.37	Mean 144.58	Mean 151.24	Mean 130.46	Mean 148.35
MPB 6-19	MPB 15-38	MPB 5-17	MPB 10-37	MPB .1-2	MPB 14-32
AGL: 6-19	AGL: 12	AGL: 10	AGL: 12	AGLB: 9	AGL: 12

Withdrew: 44 (15%)
Retention rate: 85%

DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS

When one compares the entire sub-groups mean percentiles for pre- and post-test scores, one notes these differences:

Vocabulary
6-9 (7.5 median) Vocabulary mean pre-test percentile band
15-38 (26.5 median) Vocabulary mean post-test percentile band
19: Average percentile gain on college freshman norms
10: Approximate mean pre-test grade score
12: Approximate mean post-test grade score
2: Approximate mean reading level gain

Comprehension
5-17 (11 median): Comprehension mean pre-test percentile band
10-37 (23.5 median): Comprehension mean post-test percentile band
12.5: Average percentile gain on college freshman norms
10: Approximate mean pre-test grade score
12: Approximate mean post-test grade score
2: Approximate mean reading level gain

Speed of Comprehension
.1-2 (1.05 median): Speed of comprehension mean pre-test percentile band
14-32 (23 median): Speed of comprehension mean post-test percentile band

21.92 (22): Average percentile gain on college freshman norms
below 9: Approximate mean pre-test grade score
12: Approximate mean post-test grade score
3 (or more): Approximate mean reading level gain

CLASS COMPLETION RATE: 85% (N:246), of the students who enrolled, finished the course
15% (N:44) of the students, who enrolled in the course, dropped out. Some never attended the first class; some attended until near the end.

SUCCESSFULNESS: This researcher did a study in the early 1980's whereby every student (N:815) who was about to graduate from Mott Community College was given a reading test in order to ascertain how well our successful (graduating) students read. That level was between twelfth (12) grade and college freshman (13) reading level.

The students in this study who took reading beginning at the English 020 level (ninth grade level, or above) read at twelfth grade level at the end of the semester. Those students should have adequate reading skills to be successful here at Mott Community College, as evidenced on standardized reading tests.

OTHER STUDENTS: Some students come to the college testing below the norms on the Cooperative English Test. That test is designed for reading levels nine through college freshman level (9-13). If a student scores below ninth grade level (-9) on the placement test, and enrolls in a reading class, that student is tested more appropriately on the Gates-MacGinitie Reading Tests (Riverside Publishers).

NUMBER: Sixty-two (62) tested below the ninth grade reading level at admission time in the fall of 1988. They comprised 17.6% of our total reading course population. In other words, almost 18% of our students read below high school level upon entry.

Individual Test Scores:

Vocabulary		Comprehension	
Pre-test Scores	Post-Test Scores	Pre-test Scores	Post-test Scores
6.4	8.4	8.8	8.3
6.7	7.3	7.6	11.4
7.0	9.0	7.6	12.0
12.8	12.2	8.3	12.7
8.7	9.0	7.6	7.7
7.6	U-absences	8.3	
5.5	6.3	5.6	9.2
8.4	8.1	6.7	9.2
8.1	10.2	6.1	9.9

Vocabulary		Comprehension	
Pre-test Scores	Post-test Scores	Pre-test Scores	Post-test Scores
6.0	7.6	8.8	11.4
10.2	9.6	7.7	9.1
10.9	12.2	7.0	8.7
4.2	4.3	3.2	4.5
10.6	U-	6.1	
6.0	7.1	5.9	7.9
12.9	11.3	5.9	9.9
10.6	10.2	7.3	9.5
4.6	6.0	5.2	5.8
7.6	9.9	7.3	9.9
8.1	9.3	7.3	9.1
6.7	7.6	7.9	7.6
7.3	7.6	5.6	8.3
10.9	10.9	8.8	11.4
8.7	8.1	5.9	5.8
4.6	5.0	3.9	6.1
11.7	11.3	8.8	9.1
11.7	12.8	3.9	7.0
7.6	7.8	5.3	7.3
6.0	6.7	6.1	7.7
9.6	9.3	7.6	10.2
8.4	9.0	8.8	10.9
6.3	7.1	8.8	8.8
4.6	7.1	6.4	8.7
8.4	9.6	8.1	12.0
5.8	6.3	7.6	7.3
7.0	6.5	8.3	7.0
7.8	8.4	7.9	8.3
10.2	9.9	7.9	10.4
7.8	9.0	7.3	10.2
9.0	8.7	7.3	10.9
11.3	9.9	7.3	7.3
8.1	8.1	8.3	10.7
7.6	8.4	5.0	9.7
7.8	8.4	7.9	9.9
9.6	9.0	8.3	10.7
8.1	9.3	8.1	10.7
8.7	8.1	8.8	8.7
6.2	Withdrew	5.3	
10.2	11.3	8.3	12.0
9.0	9.0	7.6	9.1
9.0	9.6	7.3	9.1
4.1	5.6	4.5	6.1
7.0	6.0	5.3	4.6
7.3	6.8	4.2	7.3
6.3	7.6	6.1	8.3
6.0	6.3	7.3	9.7
8.4	9.9	8.6	12.0

Vocabulary		Comprehension	
Pre-test Scores	Post-test Scores	Pre-test Scores	Post-test Scores
5.5	10.2	7.6	9.7
9.0	10.6	7.3	10.4
7.3	9.3	5.9	10.4
3.1	U-absences	2.4	
8.7	10.2	8.3	11.4
Total = 491.3	Total = 500.3	Total = 430.2	Total = 529.0
Mean = 7.92	Mean = 8.48	Mean = 6.94	Mean = 8.97
N:62	N:59	N:62	N:59

MEAN TEST SCORES: When one compares the entire sub-group's mean reading grade levels for pre- and post-test scores, one notes these differences:

Vocabulary
7.92: Vocabulary mean pre-test grade score
8.49: Vocabulary mean post-test grade score
+.57: Average vocabulary grade score gain

Comprehension
6.94: Comprehension mean pre-test grade score
8.97: Comprehension mean post-test grade score
+2.03: Average vocabulary grade score gain

SUCCESSFULNESS: Some students enter MCC's reading classes reading as low as second grade level. The average reading level of students reading below high school level, during the fall of 1988, was near seventh grade level (vocabulary: 7.92 and comprehension: 6.94).

Those students made a half year's (+.57) progress in vocabulary development and two full-years' (+2.03) growth in comprehension.

When one realizes that these students have progressed at about half the normal rate throughout their previous schooling, it is obvious that they are achieving two to four times as quickly in MCC's reading classes as they have ever achieved before.

Students who do not read at eleventh grade level at the end of their reading classes are advised by their reading instructor to take another reading class.

DEAF STUDENTS: The following students were in one class offered especially for deaf students. All but one student took the Gates MacGinitie Reading Test. One student took the Cooperative English Test: Reading Comprehension. All scores are in grade equivalencies.

Vocabulary

Pre-test Scores	Post-test Scores
3.3	5.3
3.7	4.4
-2.5	2.7
3.4	6.3
2.7	4.1
Withdrew	
Withdrew	
2.5	3.3
3.1	4.1
3.8	4.0
3.5	4.1
3.1	4.1
-2.5	3.1
-1.3	3.2
-9	12
Total 47.5	65.1
N:16	N:16
Mean Entering Grade Score: 3.39	4.65
Total Mean Gain: 1.26	

Comprehension

Pre-test Scores	Post-test Scores
3.6	5.6
2.6	4.7
3.3	5.2
7.3	7.9
2.4	3.8
Withdrew	
Withdrew	
-2.4	3.0
4.1	4.5
2.4	4.5
3.6	5.6
3.8	5.8
3.2	5.3
-1.4	2.5
-9	11
4.1	4.5
Total 53.2	73.9

Mean Entering Grade Score: 3.8 Mean Exiting Grade Score: 5.28
N:16 N:16

Total Mean Gain: 1.48

Students in all classes are required to make two full years of improvement in their own comprehension scores. Half of these deaf students did that, but all students made gains. When one remembers that the average deaf student has gained only three years of reading achievement in the 12 years he has been in school, his achievement here at MCC is outstanding.

GRADES FOR ALL GROUPS

Class	Total Number	S (Satisfactory)	U (Unsatisfactory)	W Withdrew	I Incomplete
010 (5 GL)	19	12	5	2	0
012 (6 GL)	4	3	1	0	0
014 (7 GL)	21	8	9	4	0
016 (8 GL)	15	10	4	1	0
020 (9 GL)	262	187	40	33	2
030 (11 GL)	5	5	0	0	0
100	12	12	0	0	0
Withdrew before Midterm	26	—	—	26	—
Totals	364	237	59	66	2

GL = Grade Level

364: Total beginning students
66: Total withdrawals
298: Students who completed the course
237: Students who passed the course (79.53% of those who finished the course)
59: Students who failed the course (19.8% of those who finished the course)
2: Students who took an "incomplete" grade (.007%)

Almost 80% (79.53%) of the students who completed a reading course, passed it. That means their achievement scores improved by at least two grade levels. Nearly 20% (19.8%) of the students who completed the course, did not pass it. Those students did make achievement gains, however, but not as much as two years.

SUMMARY: Most students who enroll in a reading class at Mott Community College (MCC) finish that course (85%). Most of those students improve their reading skills by two full grade-levels in 15 weeks. Most students who enter MCC reading classes and are reading in the high school range, read about tenth grade level. Their exiting scores average twelfth grade. Research shows that students graduating from MCC read at about twelfth grade level and, therefore, those students leaving the reading program should be prepared to read their textbooks in other MCC classes.

Some students enter MCC reading below high school level. Their average comprehension scores are near seventh grade level (6.94). Those students also make two years of comprehension achievement progress (8.97) during 15 weeks of instruction. They are advised to take another reading class.

About eighty percent (79.53%) of all students who finish their reading course, pass it. In other words, the average reading student at MCC makes two years of reading achievement growth in 15 weeks. Whether they are prepared to meet the skill requirements of other MCC classes depends upon what those individuals' skill levels were at entry. Reading curricula at MCC are individualized and varied enough to begin each student at his, or her, instructional level and work with that student until he, or she, reaches an adequate reading skill level. We achieve that goal at four times the average rate for nationally normed progress. When one realizes that we are working with students who have never accomplished average reading achievement gains, our statistics are impressive.

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ERIC Clearinghouse for
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